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TITLE: Using information from Supplement to HIV/AIDS Surveillance (SHAS) Project to Design Prevention Programs

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ISSUE: Behavioral information is essential in the design of appropriate interventions and/or educational programs to promote HIV prevention in rural and or urban settings.

SETTING: Three rural counties and two urban communities situated in South Carolina.

PROJECT: The SHAS Project in South Carolina conducts in depth interviews of persons newly diagnosed with HIV or AIDS in three areas of the state, one rural and two urban.

RESULTS: The SHAS Project in South Carolina has collected data from interviews of HIV infected and AIDS patients from 1991 to present. Of the 1415 interviews, 318 are from residents of rural areas and 1007 reside in urban areas. While respondents in the rural communities were over 87% black, those from the urban areas were approximately 74% black. An increased number of persons in rural settings have an income of less than 1% (68% vs. 41%). Rural residents were less likely to use condoms one year before diagnosis (49% vs. 39%) with steady partners. An increased number of rural residents report having had one or more STDs in the past 10 years (54% vs. 47%).

LESSONS LEARNED: HIV prevention programs in rural areas of South Carolina need to focus on a low-income, predominantly black population. Interventions should include social marketing of condoms as well as accessibility and ongoing treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.

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